

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-16 were previously cancelled. Claims 18, 28 and 29 are currently amended. Claims 17 and 19-27 are carried forward, all as follows.

Claims 1-16 (Cancelled)

17. (Previously Presented) A folding apparatus comprising:

a spur cylinder;

a folding jaw cylinder cooperating with said spur cylinder and defining a transfer gap in cooperation with said spur cylinder;

at least one spur strip on said spur cylinder and having a plurality of spur needles adapted to releasably hold a leading end of a first signature passing through said transfer gap;

at least one deflector on said spur cylinder and usable to selectively cover said spur needles; and

means for moving said at least one deflector between a spur needle exposing position retracted in said spur cylinder and a spur needle covering position extending from said spur cylinder in response to rotation of said spur cylinder and passage of said at least one spur strip through said transfer gap.

18. (Currently Amended) The folding apparatus of claim 17 wherein said at least one deflector is retracted during passage of said at least one spur strip through said transfer gap and extended after passage of said at least one spur strip through said transfer

gap.

19. (Previously Presented) The folding apparatus of claim 17 wherein said at least one deflector, in said spur needle covering position, is arranged between an end section of a released signature and extended spur needles of a second spur strip subsequent to said at least one spur strip on said spur cylinder.

20. (Previously Presented) The folding apparatus of claim 17 wherein said spur cylinder has an axis of rotation and said at least one deflector extends parallel to said spur cylinder axis of rotation.

21. (Previously Presented) The folding apparatus of claim 17 wherein said at least one deflector is a comb having teeth assigned to said spur needles.

22. (Previously Presented) The folding apparatus of claim 17 wherein said at least one deflector extends radially outwardly beyond said spur needles.

23. (Previously Presented) The folding apparatus of claim 17 further including a second spur strip adapted to releasably hold a leading end of a second signature and wherein said at least one deflector is positioned before, in a direction of rotation of said spur cylinder, said second spur strip.

24. (Previously Presented) The folding apparatus of claim 17 wherein said at least

one deflector covers said at least one spur strip after passage of said at least one spur strip through said transfer gap.

25. (Previously Presented) The folding apparatus of claim 17 wherein said at least one spur strip and said at least one deflector are retracted after passage through said transfer gap.

26. (Previously Presented) The folding apparatus of claim 17 wherein said at least one deflector includes an inclined face extending from a shell face of said spur cylinder opposite to a direction of rotation of said spur cylinder.

27. (Previously Presented) The folding apparatus of claim 17 further including a straight line extending between axes of rotation of said spur cylinder and said folding jaw cylinder and wherein said deflector, in said spur needle covering position, is arranged within an angular range of between 30° and 60° with respect to said straight line.

28. (Currently Amended) The folding apparatus of claim 27 wherein said angular ~~range~~image is between 30° and 45°.

29. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~A spur cylinder adapted for use in a folding apparatus of claim 17 further including comprising:

~~at least one spur strip supported on said spur cylinder and having a~~

~~plurality of spur needles;~~

a spur cylinder shell surface, said spur needles being extendable and retractable with respect to said shell surface and wherein said at least one[:]; ~~a deflector is associated with said at least one spur strip and~~ extendable and retractable with respect to said shell surface and said at least one spur strip, said at least one deflector selectively covering and exposing said spur needles in response to said rotation of said spur cylinder.